



HOMELAND SECURITY COMMITTEE

Statement of Subcommittee Chairman John Ratcliffe (R-TX) Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Protection Subcommittee

“Industry Views of the Chemical Facility Anti-Terrorism Standards Program”

February 15, 2018

Remarks as Prepared

The Chemical Facility Anti-Terrorism Standards Program, or CFATS program, began in 2007 in order to keep dangerous chemicals out of the hands of terrorists seeking to do our nation harm. Since then, the program has grown and strengthened through the tireless work put in by the men and woman of DHS, and through the relentless effort of industry to keep their facilities secure. The daily management and security of high-risk chemicals is not an issue that government can solve on its own. Working with industry stakeholders in this area is an integral aspect of our nation’s continuing counterterrorism efforts. By identifying high-risk facilities and ensuring that they have appropriate security measures in place, the risks associated with these chemicals can be heavily mitigated.

Especially after recent tragedies, greater collaboration between the government and facility owner-operators also can provide confidence and peace of mind to the public.

It is important to point out that CFATS is a broad program that covers facilities that use, manufacture, store or handle specific quantities chemicals that DHS has identified as being extremely dangerous. As shown by the various industries that our witness come from, facilities under this program touch all aspects of our economy, such as energy, healthcare, mining, agriculture, electronics, and plastics. The need for Congress and DHS to get this program right is both a national security and economic imperative.

The CFATS program has used Risk-Based Performance Standards, such as perimeter security, access control, and cybersecurity, to examine and evaluate a facility’s security posture. While it is up to the individual owner-operators of a CFATS-covered facility to choose what programs best ensure the security of stored chemicals, a high-risk facility ultimately must implement stringent standards set forth in CFATS. As DHS previously stated before this Subcommittee, the significant reduction in the number of chemical facilities that represent the highest risk is an important success of the CFATS program and is attributable both to the design of the program and to the work of CFATS personnel and industry at thousands of chemical facilities.

Through engagement and collaboration with industry stakeholders over the past few years, this Committee is hopeful that the CFATS program can continue to protect chemicals from those who mean to do us harm.

I would to thank our panel for taking the time today to testify. Your thoughts and opinions are very important as we oversee the Department of Homeland Security in meeting its duties under the Chemical Facility Anti-Terrorism Standards Program. As stakeholders, you offer a unique and integral insight into the interworking's of this program which is set to expire at the end of this year. I look forward to a robust conversation with our distinguished panel that will support our efforts in overseeing the CFATS program.

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